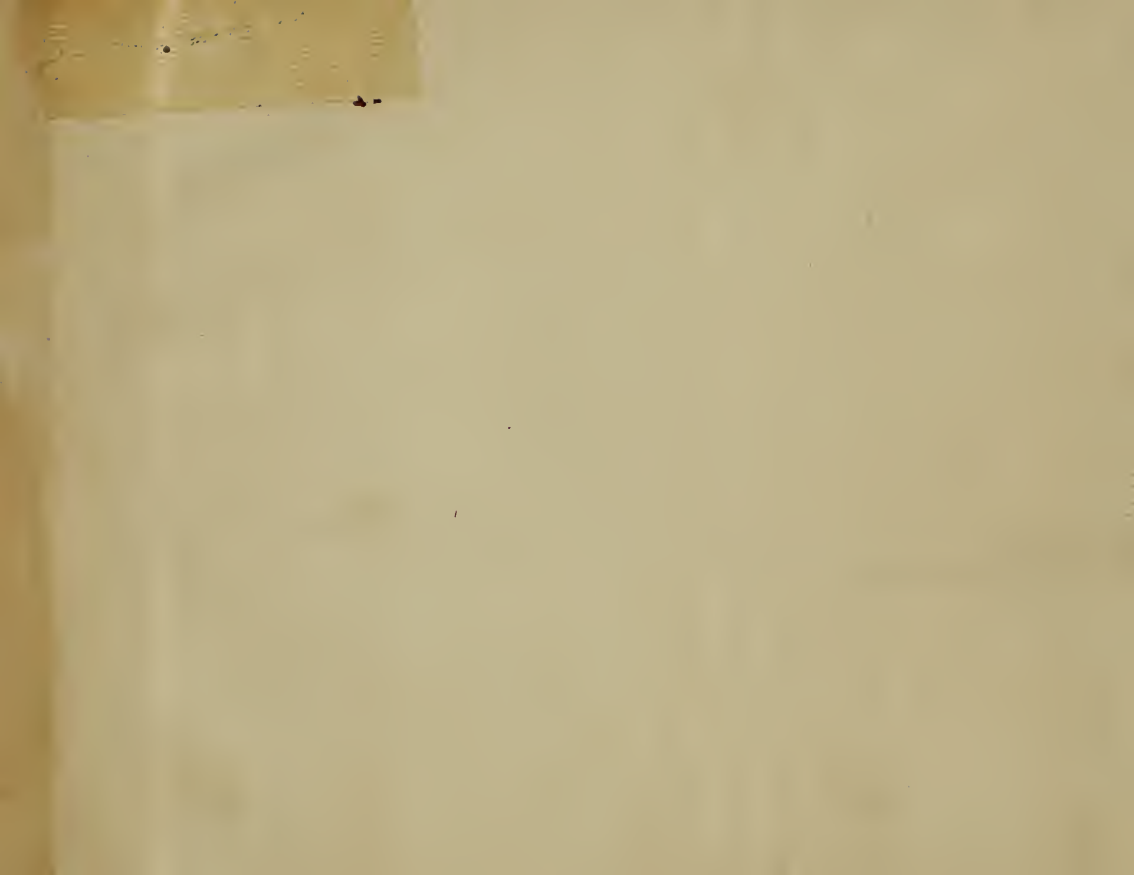






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A Poem

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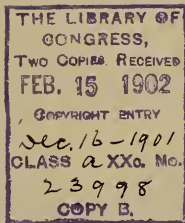
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By Ernest Hugh Fitzpatrick.

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To King Edward VII and to President Theodore Roosevelt
—the Rulers of the two English-speaking Nations—this is re-
spectfully dedicated, ❀ ❀ ❀ ❀ ❀ ❀ ❀ ❀

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THE PASSING OF WILLIAM M'KINLEY.

O Destiny! ruthless in thine inexorable might!
That slays the nation's best, regardless of the wrong or right,
Or even of those mighty issues, that so fierce and so long
Have surged around our ship of state, in growth so rapid yet so strong.
What in your lap you hold, what great purpose you have in store,
Is still unknown to us; pity our weakness we implore.
Great men have lived and died, enriching country and their race;
Caring naught for life, if but men their ideals did embrace;
Sacrificing many a joy, their country to conserve;
Striving for the good of all, least for themselves reserve.

These men are found in every age, our race to beautify.
Ye Powers of Darkness! Question their goodness I defy!
Our best, our greatest, and our strongest, do we freely give
That men may learn sad lessons, that righteousness may live.
The divine light that guides us closer to our Father's fold;
Is trying us now by fire as the smith refines his gold.
Bringing back in God's mercy, those wandering, straying sheep,
That have left a father's home, the wages of sin to reap.
To sing a song of sadness, drawn from mine inmost soul;
To bring forth afresh those tears, that we as a nation whole
Did shed in contrite sorrow, that brought us near to God.
This is now my mission, and by that newly turned sod,

To keep fresh the lesson taught, lest should we forget too soon,
Reverting to indifference, before the changing moon.
The nation's head was bent in grief, a nation's pride was hurt;
All party strife was stilled in death, all unseemly mirth
Was hushed by that world-wide sympathy pertaining to those hours,
Sad thoughts and anticipated death with its dreaded powers
Did fill our souls with anguish; for a while life lost its charm
Before a stricken chief; not yet full meted the great harm,
For life did linger yet awhile, as if to mock our grief.
Relying upon God's mercy alone we found relief.
With broken hearts and heads bowed down, mercy did we supplicate,
But He with infinite wisdom, His will to us did indicate;

In taking to Himself our chief, that we this cup should drink
In humble penitence, on our past misdeeds to sadly think,
Our false pride to set aside, our false ideas to renounce;
Drawing this people to Himself, further blessings to pronounce;
For me to speak of this crime, against a nation's chosen head,
Further must we trace it back, not merely as the bullet sped,
The wretched assassin sought this superb man's life to take;
Seeking with devilish cunning and skill, new pervers to make
To those doctrines, that would destroy all faith in God and peace.
Tumult would reign upon the earth and all civil law would cease,
Each man being a law to himself; until plunged in depths beneath,
Civilization would stand still and all progress end in sleep.

Perchance human life itself here no longer could remain ;
Man would destroy man and our Earth encumbered with her slain,
Would look upward to Heaven praying for instant death and hell.
The spirit of man departed in foolish pride will she rebel ;
No longer wishing to remain a sphere will seek her grave
In endless space, annihilation will she boldly brave ;
Of this martyred and great man let me sing and write awhile,
Endeavoring to learn of him' when he was yet a child.
Born in the State of Ohio, in the year eighteen forty three,
At the town of Niles, without herald or pomp or mystery.
From cradle to grave he developed so lofty a mind,
That all through these long years none could scarce a blemish find.

Earnest from his youth, obedient to his parents' will,
Proud in effort and fond of work he did their hopes fulfill.
Not reared in affluence, nor yet in that extreme poverty
Seen by some of our bygone great, not his such misery.
Strong was his trust in God learned in childhood lisping days,
As frolicsome and full of life around his mother's knee he plays.
How could a government and country like ours long continue,
If the young are not taught the fear of God and evil eschew?
This cannot be done by state or church, nor yet by Sabbath school;
Nor imparted could this be, by professors or by rule.
Take down our churches and our school buildings reared so great,
Neither can do us lasting good in a self constituted state,

Unless our mothers instill into our opening minds
Those great principles of truth. Truths that we shall ever find
Useful in all our great efforts. Planting in our hearts those seeds
That would carry the human race to higher and to loftier deeds.
In this good man's life we see how a mother's loving care
Planted true seeds of greatness in the child she bare;
Those seeds taking root brought forth a great and goodly crop,
That shed a blessing around his life; nor did his death stop
His great services to the state, country and to his race.
Nothing could his loved memories out of our hearts efface.
A faithful wife gave that mother a daughter's care and love
Until the angel trumpet called her to her rest above.

She had borne this great man, William McKinley, whom now we mourn;
Struck down by a madman's fell hand, him whom no man ill had borne;
Casting the nation in sadness, in misery and in shame,
Teaching man to execrate even liberty's very name;
Men must learn that liberty extended, can no license give
To man's baser nature, and that justice alone can live
Where human freedom guards and protects each man's sacred right,
That wealth and poverty should be held equal in the law's sight.
Thus while slavery cursed the land, vengeance cried to God;
And He in His omnipotent way, applied the scourging rod.
The land was plunged in war; blood flowed as if in a stream,
No home but mourned its dead. Phantasm of a horrid dream!

Rising Phoenix-like from ashes, the country upward sprang,
Uncursed by human slavery, liberty's true bell we rang,
Telling all peoples of the earth we had removed a stain
From our escutcheon, and from a great nation's name.
While this struggle lasted, William McKinley, where was he?
Seeking some sinecure or distinction? Tell me where may he be?
Enlisted a private in the ranks, taking his chances like a man;
Determined to fight for the country, despising all who ran
Away from stern duty's call, for no coward had we here,
Even in the darkest hours when all seemed lost, and despair
Had seized upon the nation's chiefs, and hopes light but faintly flickered
William McKinley lost not his faith in God, but greatly stirred

To deeds of higher effort, to his fellows he imparted
His zeal, energy and devotion, he was whole hearted.
No sluggard was he in war, ready if called to die
And to meet a soldier's death, unstained by any infamy.
For three years he followed the banners of victory,
Through many a hard day's march and long watch as sentry.
Then leaving the army with honors and increase in rank,
He with thousands of others into civil life backward sank,
Never again to be disturbed by civil strife and civil war.
What strife he was to have in future, was in words before the bar.
Now came his hardest task, his own battle in life to fight,
To serve his country as statesman, he'd strive with all his might.

Putting his shoulder to the wheel and with this object fixed,
He spent many an hour in work, seldom in play he mixed.
His labors began to bear fruit, then at last came the day
When he was called by party vote, a leading part to play.
Whate'er he did. he did with all his might and with all his will:
Seeking with high purpose to make greater advancement still.
Thus upward did he pass, making warm friends where'er he went,
Indefatigable, in mental effort many hours he spent.
His sterling qualities of mind and open honesty,
Won the confidence of all, nor had he an enemy
That caused him any useless fear, for kindness itself to all,
He drew men to himself; the worthy in friendship he did install.



Thus with care he proceeded to lay the foundations
For that name he was to build, to be honored by all nations.
All his goodness readily did admit, for they perceived
That lying under that great heart, his gentle nature stood revealed.
From honor to honor he advanced, nor was he daunted
For a moment, nor did he appear until he was wanted,
• Seeking no honor for which he was unsuited in the state ;
Thus with the utmost modesty, that charm of the really great,
He rose in power, in intellect and in people's estimation.
That in which he believed, he believed with deep conviction.
To admit his able arguments, many a one he brought,
What they themselves had considered wrong, thus he wrought



A change in public opinion ; he always himself pleaded
For a patient hearing, which he readily too conceded.
Thus from year to year, he gained repute and numerous friends ;
He held that protection would conserve the country's varied ends.
New conditions had arisen here unknown in the world's history.
These had brought into being other conditions. This was no mystery.
These caused reconsideration of well-accepted principles.
The principle of protected industries. No miracles
Did he expect, but thus thought he, that this great country,
Vast in size, stretching from sea to sea so mightily,
So rich in agriculture that the soil need but be scratched
To obtain a living from her bounteous hand unmatched,

Nowhere was there such, lying prepared and ready at man's hands,
To be had for the simple bidding. All these virgin lands,
Lands to be given without price to those who came across the sea.
No questions were to be asked as to race, creed or country;
All were treated alike. Dutch, French, Jew, British or Russian,
Many came and acquired lands, men of all trades and station;
Thus the country vastly increased in wealth and in population;
Under the blessings of free government without discrimination.
No one felt the hand of tyranny. all was peace and plenty.
Mr. McKinley said: "We could fill all store houses that are empty,
The vast agricultural resources throughout the land should pay
Something toward building up the industries of the present day,

Thus stimulating the output of all raw production ;
Nor should they demur, but help in the country's re-construction,
For they owned the land, and it had increased in valuation ;
Land which they had acquired with little cost from the nation.
Nor were they long kept from the possession of their estate,
Then until their revenue came they had not long to wait.
He stood upon these principles and held to this contention,
That we have forty-eight great states or commonwealths in the nation,
All with vast and rapidly increasing areas of agriculture,
The yearly increase in plowed lands alone made safe the venture
Of high protection of the growing industries of the people ;
To stimulate our mines and mills and make business stable,

Causing this country to be great and vastly prosperous,
Rich and prosperous far beyond the dreams of avarice.”
Thus did McKinley dream of a united contented land,
As he became the spokesman of those who firmly took their stand
Upon the principles of great protected industries.
Many believed and to limit import from foreign countries,
Supported his policy, which the country then tried
With great apparent success, for a time was laid aside
All opposition. His tariff was made the law of the land;
And prosperity smiled under the guidance of his master hand.
This stimulus being removed, however, production was curtailed,
Men were thrown out of work and many dire want assailed.

Trouble overtook the country, and vagrancy was rife,
The volume of money became a cause of heated strife.
Some said that, "Scarce money made a very dear dollar,
The workingman's troubles would cease and want disappear
If silver were freely coined and money made cheaper,
That those who possessed the dollar wished to make them scarce,
Because the more of workingman's toil they could purchase.
They would thus the toiler enslave, and liberty would die
Strangled to death by money's power," so did they cry.
"These arguments are base," quoth Mr. McKinley, nor did he halt
Until all heard his words, "If the workingman is to earn his salt,
Open the mills and mines, and the mint for itself will care,

Let our factories be running, America then can dare
Look the whole world in the face, and competition defying
Employ all idle hands, with trade demands alone complying.''
Thus spoke McKinley and the country listened to his voice,
Placed him in power and since in plenty has rejoiced.
Then Cuba in the throes of her revolutionary woes,
Drew the gaze of our people who, unwilling to make foes
Of the brave Spaniards, had' endured for many years
The irritation of war and trouble not wholly theirs.
In this neighboring island the people appealed in vain.
At last this republic so far heeded their piteous strain,
That representation was made to the government of Spain

To mitigate these ills; but the great Canovas was slain
By an assassin's hand, thus changing history's course,
For no other in all Spain did possess sufficient force
Or knowledge of ourselves; hence when he was foully killed,
It made the roles of the two countries the harder to be filled.
Then came the morning when throughout the length and breadth of the land,
The news spread fast that the Maine was blown up near the Spanish strand,
The nation filled instantly with revenge, fierce and deep,
Demanded to be led to war, ready in blood to steep,
If by blood the cruel insult could only be wiped out.
“Not so.” said our President, “let us establish beyond doubt
That the vessel was blown up, not from within but without.

Having proved this by scientific investigation,
Being sure we are right, we shall not place this great nation
Into any false position, we shall be free those steps to take
To end the wrong in this adjacent land, new precedents to make,
That henceforth no great human wrong can long survive
Near our shores; our nation will somehow contrive
To end that wrong, by letting loose the dogs of war.”
So spake Mr. McKinley, and a great deal more.
The country plunged in war whether wrong or right,
Girded its loins and put forth its giant might.
Our President with great foresight and care found how Old England stood,
Conscious that her moral aid would be so great a power for good

That no nation would have the daring to interfere,
The Old Land stood firmly by the New, there was little fear
That the Lion would forsake his Whelps. Then at the mast head
We unfurled Old Glory, and our peaceful garments shed.
Of the course of that war I will but sing a few lines;
Telling of Dewey's victory, how he crossed the Spanish mines!
For three hundred years or more the Filipino land,
Spain had held in conquest, ruling with an iron hand,
For years insurrection had lasted there, much blood had flowed;
No hope there seemed for those people, none sympathy bestowed.
On the breaking out of war between ourselves and Spain.
They made good use of opportunities long sought in vain;

When Dewey gained his victory in Manila Bay ;
These dusky Filipinos did to our forces point the way
To the conquest of all those islands, so numerous and rich.
What happened then, and how their ire was raised to such a pitch !
War raged between those who were once allies,
Waged with those to whom we'd given war supplies.
Nor did we cease until the flag was raised throughout the land
And another power implanted midst the Oriental strand.
While on the field our soldiers were one in spirit and aim ;
At home we were divided ; some maintaining that a stain
Had been placed upon our honor, a tarnish on our flag ;
Many holding that the war was unjust, and bound to drag

Thro' many weary years, some that our government was at stake,
And many feared the rupture of peace and for peace sake
Counselled less fierceness in this great battle of ideas,
Many said there was more in this than what to us appears.
Having an opportunity to record their will,
The people returned McKinley with greater powers still.
The country settled on a much broader basis,
The people more contented since the war crisis.
The Stars and Stripes will henceforth float forever in the Orient,
Making us a world power in the Orient and Occident.
Our President was able to grapple with the new conditions,
So great a change had we undergone from our old positions;

A master-hand was needed at the helm, and that was McKinley's;
Few could have made the transition so quickly and yet so calmly.
The people were perplexed owing to the money problem;
Some wanted gold and some silver, it was hard to please them;
Mr. McKinley stood for the single standard of value;
Mr. Bryan firmly held that silver should still continue
To be freely coined as gold, and without discrimination.
Thus did the classic contest wage causing perturbation
In business and industrial circles; until on it the people voted;
The gold men were returned to power, nor was a wrong act committed;
Men were glad when this great classical contest was over,
"Then all was quiet on the banks of the Potomac river."

Having a freer hand McKinley desired to end the war early ;
Trouble was brewing in far-off China, where he acted promptly,
Making our good influence felt among other nations.
The Great Powers also commended our moderations.
China had set the whole civilized world at defiance,
Our troops were ordered there, all having perfect reliance
In the nation's chief, knowing that he would preserve our honor ;
More glory and prestige was gained, yet to this very hour.
Few know the great difficulties we had to overcome.
But in the end all turned out well, then our troops came home ;
And here at home our money was placed on a safer footing ;
Our trade increased by leaps and bounds, ourselves astonishing.

Our crops were good, great and bounteous, and brought good prices;
Our factories and mills were busy, all kinds of devices
Were tried, business had regained its confidence and courage;
Our mines were worked to their greatest holdings; at no age
Of the world's commercial history was this scene beheld,
All nature seemed in league with us, as if to firmly weld
Our prosperity into our very national life.
Greater in importance did we rise, willing that all strife
Of former days should be forgotten; for fear had seized
Upon us that this confidence might perhaps be a disease
That would react upon ourselves, bringing great calamity
Upon the nation. Wise men shook their heads in mystery.

So great was the prosperity promised by McKinley,
That neither extravagance nor speculating wildly
Could show that confidence was misplaced by the whole nation.
For all joined in this prosperity, men of all ranks and station—
Fears were soon dispelled by advances steady, firm and solid,
And reckless prodigality further venture did not forbid.
So great was our prosperity, that at one bound we sprang
To a foremost place among the nations without a jealous pang.
Many were the praises given us, praises for our great worth,
Converting this boundless continent into the greatest one on earth,
Making the desert to bloom into a garden. Surely time well spent;
Taking the surplus of all nations, drawing them to this continent—

Mr. McKinley rendered another service to the nation,
With one hand he drew the southern states into closer union,
Closer than they had been since the civil war, closer to our bosom,
Making kindly feeling, out of once sore hearts, to outward blossom.
The other hand he stretched across the seas to Great Britain ;
He drew the Anglo-Saxon into a closer fold, making certain
The peace of the world, if this union could but be cemented.
Having performed this herculean task, fully was he contented
To let posterity judge his work. All bitterness of bygone strife
He had removed from the mother land, and also from our national life ;
Thus cementing all those whose language and institutions are the same,
Whose destinies are one, drawing together the English-speaking name,

Those whose interests are inseparable. The joys of the one
Are now the joys of the other, the prosperity of the one
Brings prosperity to the other. The sorrows of one
Bring sorrows to the other, each being but a part of the one
Indissoluble are joined in one. Surely McKinley has justly won
Immortality. Let no man ever gainsay it; our posterity
Will call him blessed. Perhaps tho' now judged by some with severity.
Trace his course and policy since first elected President,
How great was his growth of mind, and how broad indeed was it's bent;
How great was his mission; how great a ruler he had become;
There were many that were opposed to him, even these gave him respect,
So full of love was he for his fellow-men that none could expect

To find any malice in his quiet demeanor and conduct.
Surely he was an evolution of the times, America's product.
Grasping those higher instincts that God to man has given,
These instincts impelled him to speak as through life he'd striven.
The sentiments he voiced were such that men heard and marvelled:
Sentiments so lofty, so great, as if of wisdom distilled.
Many in view of after events considered that his message,
Was a message from God, all 'throughout its passage;
These are his words, omitting rhyme but not the meter,
To let the world have his own words, sounding all the sweeter
For not any taking from and adding to, as in rhyme and rhythm.
These are his words as near as possible as he gave them.

Let no man who reads them ever forget them.
Thus he spoke to the assembled multitude at Buffalo,
In well-chosen words, in measured tones and slow :
“In this city I am no stranger and to whose good will
I am already indebted, so I have still further reason
For satisfaction, for I meet her representatives
Of foreign powers, as well as Canada and other
British colonies, French colonies and in addition
Those from the republics of Central America,
Of Cuba and Porto Rico and South America.
These are with us in this comprehensive undertaking.
Expositions are the timekeepers of growth and progress.

They record an advance in the progress of time and the world.
They stimulate energy, enterprise and invention.
They quicken human genius, they broaden and brighten
The daily lives of the people, they open store houses
Of the intellect to the student, they educate,
They instruct the brain and the hand of man, thus promoting
Friendly rivalry, which spurs industrial progress,
Inspiring invention, further effort and endeavor.
The quest of trade is an incentive to devise, invent,
Improve and economize in cost and in production.
Business life is a struggle for success, and in future
It will become a greater struggle for supremacy.

Without competition we shall be clinging to old ideas.
Advancement would be at a standstill and effort quite lost.
Though we should be commercial competitors in all things,
Yet commercial enemies we should refrain from being.
The combined wisdom and energy of all the nations
Are none too great for the world's work, so great indeed is it.
The success of art, of science, and of all industry
Is of world-wide importance and common glory.
How near indeed is one part of the world to another.
Modern invention has knit the world closer together:
We are getting to know one another very much better.
Geographic, political differences will exist;

But distances have been effaced, we are fast becoming
Cosmopolitan, and exchange and mingle with the world
As we have never done before in the history of our growth.
Prices are fixed with precision by the laws of demand.
Isolation is no longer possible or desirable.
All throughout Christendom the same news is read the same day.
Public opinion moulds the political course of the nation.
Vast investments seek foreign'and distant shores for profit.
The tick of the cable conducts vast international business.
Every event of interest is methodically chronicled.
All this is made possible by the genius of invention.
We knew instantly the shot fired at Santiago.

There was not at the beginning of the nineteenth century
A mile of steam railroad upon the broad expanse of the globe;
Now we have enough miles to circuit the earth many times.
Nor was then a single line of electric telegraph;
Now we have a vast mileage traversing all lands and seas.
God and man have united nations indissolubly together.
No one nation can any longer be indifferent to another.
As we grow and are brought more in contact with one another,
There arises less occasion for misunderstandings.
We desire now to settle matters by arbitration;
Which is the noblest forum and tribunal for settlement
Of all international disputes and differences.

Trade statistics show this country to be great
In prosperity and unexampled business activity.
The figures are almost appalling, almost alarming.
We are utilizing our fields, our forests, and our mines.
To many we are giving profitable employment,
Comfort and happiness are thereby brought to many homes,
And also are the people helped towards saving for old age.
All are now partners in this industrial revival.
Our duties lie in the care and safety of their savings;
Their safe investment demands the highest integrity.
Vast is our business built up thro' years of struggle and toil.
No sordid or narrow policy will subserve its ends.



Wisdom and skill on the part of our manufactures
Can alone hope to hold and increase our production.
Only a broad and wise policy can keep what we have.
Reciprocity in trade is the only true and just solution.
We are in need of direct lines of commerce from producer
To consumer, to carry expeditely from seller to buyer.
We should have more ships under the American flag,
Ships built here in America and owned by Americans.
We must build and also own the Isthmian Canal;
Thus we will have a more direct line of communication
With Western Mexico, Central and South America.
Blaine was a man whose mind was ever on the alert

For a larger commerce and a truer fraternity
Of all the small and great republics of the New World.
This good work will go on, it surely cannot be stopped.
New thoughts will be awakened and new ambitions fired.
Higher achievements will be wrought. All our great interests
Are in concord not in conflict. Our real eminence rests
Not in the bloody victories of war and destruction,
But in the victories of peace and great commerce.
Let all for their own and for the world's good be moved to higher effort;
And out of this will come greater commerce, and more than this
Closer relations of mutual respect and friendship,
Friendship that will deepen and endure. Our earnest prayer is

That God will graciously vouchsafe to all our neighbors
Happiness, Peace and Prosperity; and like blessings
To all the peoples of the earth."

This was his last Message to the world and to the people.

So great! So grand! So Christian in spirit and conception!

That we would shrink from making any comments on it.

Thus we must close these lines. They were his sad and solemn death song.

The man that spake these words is dead; his earthly work is o'er;

His Spirit in this World he shed, he sleeps to rise no more.

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